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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/763,691	02/26/2001	Jacques Muller	ICB0099	7908
113	7590	01/14/2004	EXAMINER	
GRIFFIN BUTLER WHISENHUNT & SZIPL LLP SUITE PH-1 2300 NINTH STREET SOUTH ARLINGTON, VA 222042396			GOODWIN, JEANNE M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2841	

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/763,691	MULLER ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jeanne-Marguerite Goodwin	2841	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 17-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 17-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 32 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 February 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 17-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent 4,185,452 to Ikeda [hereinafter Ikeda].

Ikeda discloses a digital time display system wherein the circuit arrangement is generally similar to a conventional digital time display system which is constructed of operate on the basis of scale 60, in addition to which operates on the scale of 100, 10,000, 3,600 conversion circuit (40) which permits a display to be selectively used in either the scale of 100 or the scale of 60, and four ganged change-over switches (36-39). The display system further comprising a quartz oscillator (28), a frequency divider (30) that is designed to produce an output frequency of 2.7 Hz corresponding to a period of 0.36 second and switches(26-39). The divider (30) feeds a plurality of decimal counters (31-34) and a scale-of-24 counter (35) in turn. The switches (26-39) has a contact (A) which is directly connected with a multiplexer-decoder circuit (41) and also has a contact (B) which is connected with the circuit (41) through the conversion (40).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2841

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 31 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda.

Ikeda discloses a device as stated above with regards to claims 17-30. Ikeda discloses all the subject matter claimed by applicant with the exception of the limitation stated in claims 31 and 32, i.e., the value of the mean frequency.

With respect to claims 31 and 32: the limitations in this claim, absent any criticality, are only considered to be the “optimum” values of the operating frequency, as stated above, that a person having ordinary skill in the art would have been able to determine using routine experimentation based, among other things, on the desired accuracy, manufacturing costs, etc.

See *In re Boesch*, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980).

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant’s disclosure. The prior art cited in the PTO-892 disclose related devices. Kim ‘004, Sellie ‘674, Albisetti et al. 2002/0118606, Shelton ‘378 and FR2622315 to Georges et al. disclose decimal time systems.

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7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Jeanne-Marguerite Goodwin whose telephone number is (703) 305-0264. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (9am-6pm), alternate Fridays off. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-7724. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.



JMG
Jan. 12, 2004

DAVID MARTIN
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800